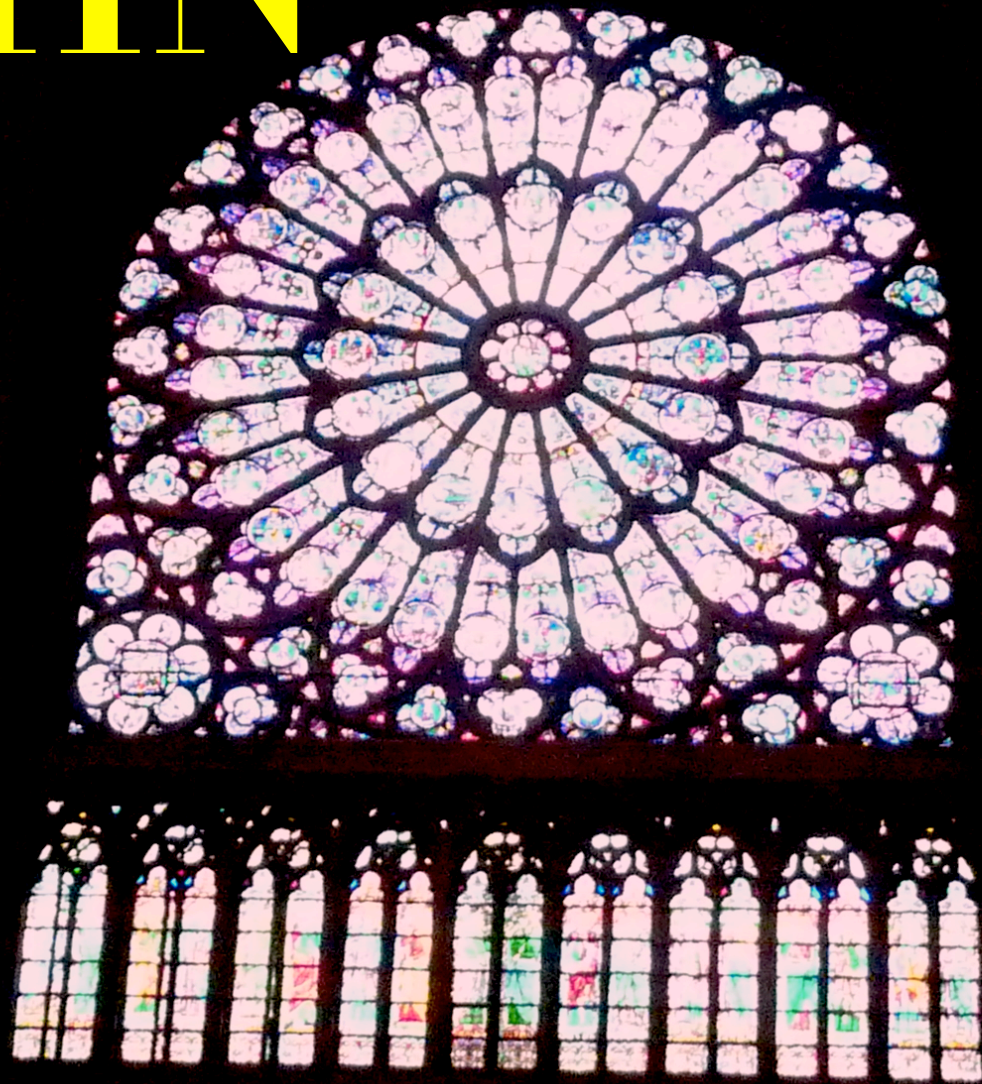


JOHN



Clara Barton & The Civil War – Part III

**Growing up in a small town –
Gail Brooks**

**Grace Martin –
Memories**

Fresh Flowers

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Welcome to JOHN



May and June gives us time to honor and remember our Mothers and Fathers. Do plan on celebrating your parents on their special days. And a special prayer to the moms and dads who are no longer with us. All of us have a heavy heart to hear of the terrible fire at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, France. The front cover photo was taken on our trip to the Cathedral in 2013.

My feature of Clarissa "Clara" Harlowe Barton's Civil War story wraps up in Part III. It was hard to leave this great person with just a brief look at all that she gave caring for wounded soldiers right on the battlefield. Hope this small portion of Miss Barton's life story will encourage more reading about her life's adventures.

The story Gail Brooks is sharing in this issue was the result of our discussions about the times we lived in during the war years. I am proud to present her story, because it may encourage those of us who should be sharing our own stories of days past before they are lost to the ages. These stories are always welcome to the pages of JOHN. Thank you Gail.

A recent trip to Green Valley, AZ to pay our respects to Edward and Betsy Trax, Christine's parents who now rest peacefully together as they so wanted. We had occasion to visit Grace Martin, who was a close friend of Betsy, and they shared many good times together in Green Valley before Betsy moved to Rio Rancho, New Mexico to be close to Christine. Grace also shared a growing up story with us and I am so pleased to share this one too. During the visit at her house, we learned a lot more about her and her adventures, which is also shared. Enjoy!

Clara Barton & the Civil War

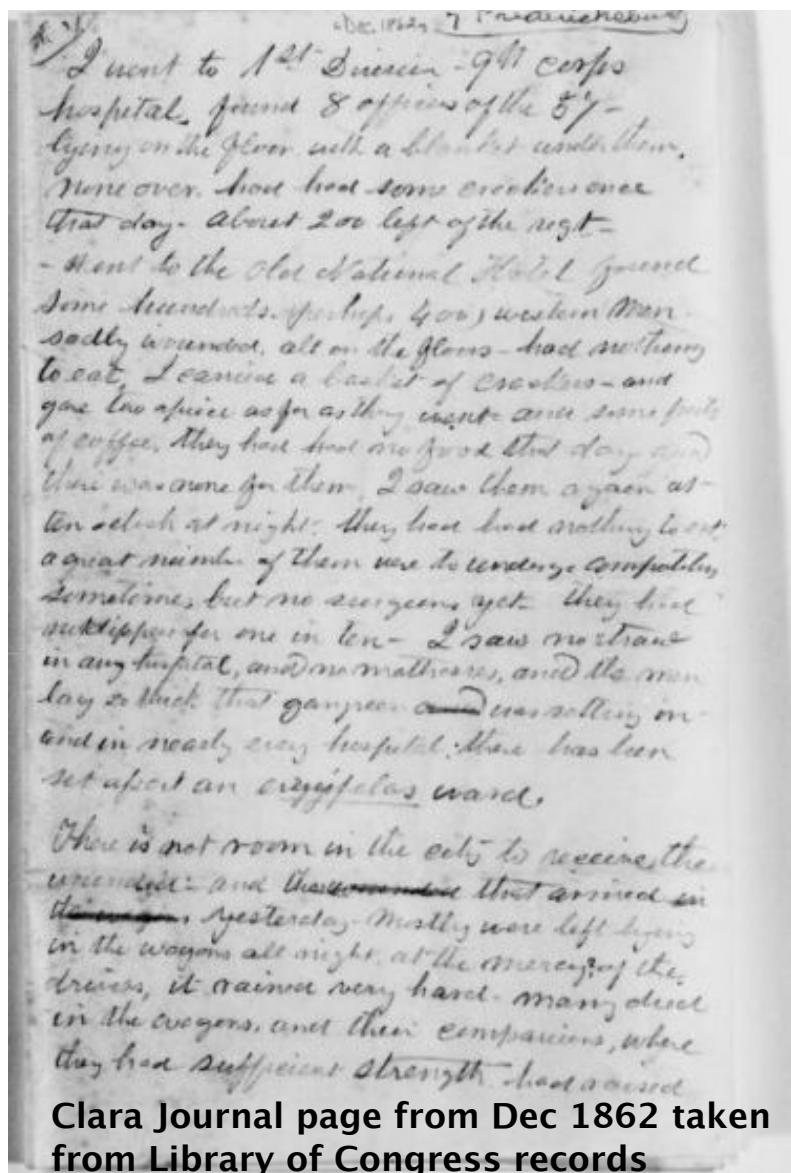
As we come to the end of Clara's story, many readers might think that this three part series was an easy task. In fact, it was not; but in a good sense. Housed at the Library of Congress, in digital form is the papers of nurse, educator, philanthropist, and lecturer Clara Barton (1821-1912) consisting of 62,000 items (81,608 images), most of which were digitized from 123 reels of previously produced microfilm. Spanning the years 1805-1958, with the bulk dating from 1861 to 1912, the collection contains correspondence, diaries and journals, reports, addresses, legal and financial papers, organizational records, lectures, writings, scrapbooks, biographical material, printed matter, memorabilia, and other papers. For me, it became a search for some reference or work that was completed prior to my three part series. As luck would have it, I was

able to secure a copy of Stephen B. Oates "A Women of Valor" published by The Free Press in 1994, New York. Between the papers online at the Library of Congress and the Stephen Oates book, my quest to capture some of the history of Clara Barton became much easier.

Part III covers Clara's work with the **Andersonville and Belle Isle - Camp Parole** environment as the Civil War comes to a close.

But before this amazing story of her devotion to finding every last missing soldier, I wanted to share a couple of events that Clara herself tracked in her notes.

They probably didn't mean much at the time as she had the habit of recording most of her life events, so these two incidents probably did not ring out to loudly to Clara. After all she was a devoted and very busy person helping out as much as she could, both physically and mentally.



Clara & the "new"drivers

By mid-October, Clara was ready to rejoin the Army of the Potomac, still encamped on the Antietam battlefield. Anticipating her needs, Colonel Rucker sent her a message: "They will fight again. Can you go-and what transportation do you want?" Clara replied: "Yes I can go, and I want 3 six mule army wagons with good drivers." In a display of confidence, Rucker furnished her *four* army wagons and a four wheel ambulance, plus five men to drive them, including the ambulance driver who had conveyed her around Alexandria. The four teamsters assigned to the wagons, Clara noted, were stout, rough men who had served throughout the Peninsula Campaign. With Welles and Clara's nephew Sam, who would go along as her assistants, they set to work loading the wagons with the biggest quantity of supplies Clara would take to the army thus far. Among the boxes was a supply of fine liquor donated by the surgeon general himself.

On October 21, Clara's wagon train set out on the road to Antietam "in the sun and dust" of a hot afternoon. Right away her four new drivers caused trouble. Indignant that they had been put in the charge of "a lady," they challenged her authority, pulling over for the night at four in the afternoon. Clara singled out their leader, George, a gnarled man with coal-black hair and eyes, and insisted that they push on until after dark. George consulted with the others, who cracked their whips "as a kind of safety valve to their smothered indignation," Clara said. Grumbling, they drew their teams back onto the road. But to annoy her, they perversely drove long past sundown, ignoring her repeated orders to stop. At nine that night, weary of their fun, they finally turned into a dark field to make camp.

Clara resolved to shame them with kindness. With the help of her ambulance driver, James, she made a fire of fence rails and then prepared coffee and supper, which she laid out neatly on a cloth on the ground, and had James fetch the men. Slowly, a little sheepishly, they took the places Clara assigned them. Then she sat down and politely ate and talked with them as if nothing had happened. The men were stunned. Later, after she had cleaned the dishes and was sitting by the dying fire, they approached her and stood "with the red glare of the embers lighting up their brown hard faces" while George spoke for them.

"We come to tell you that we're ashamed of ourselves," he said with difficulty. "We never seen a train under charge of a woman afore, and we couldn't understand it, and we didn't like it, and we thought we'd break it up, and we've been mean and contrary all day, and said a good many hard things, and you've treated us like gentlemen. We hadn't no right to expect that supper from you," he went on, "and it makes us ashamed, and we've come to ask your forgiveness." He promised they would not give her any more trouble. As for her being a woman., they would "get accustomed to that."

Clara assured them that she had no hard feelings, that as long as she had food, she would share it with them, that if they were sick, she would nurse them, and that at all times, she would treat them as gentlemen. "When I saw the rough woolen coat sleeves drawing across their faces," she said later, "it was one of the best moments of my life."

When she was ready to sleep, George hung a lighted lantern from the top of her ambulance, arranged a few blankets inside for her bed, helped her up the steps, and buckled the canvas down on the outside. When she awoke at daybreak the next morning, she smelled the aroma of burning chestnut rails and boiling coffee. George greeted her with a bucket of fresh water and announced that "breakfast was ready." She never had to cook for the men again.

"Hero of four words"

The battle for Fredericksburg raged around Clara until seven o'clock that evening, Clara spent much of the next day in the Lacy House, which the Second Corps medical director designated as a branch hospital for his corps. Here she nursed "the sadly wounded of the brave Michigan 7th" and others who had fallen in battle the day before. Aware of how difficult it was to maintain accurate medical records during a campaign, Clara tried to keep track of the men who died in the Lacy House, scribbling hasty notes in her pocket diary as to the manner and time of their deaths, their units, and where they were buried. No man was going to end up in an unknown grave and lost to his grieving family if she could help it. She even recorded the vital details of a wounded rebel prisoner: "Capt. Thomas Wm. Thurman Co. D 13 Miss. Decatur Miss. leg amputated. Parents in Georgia. 23 yers. old."

Of all the young men in the Lacy House that day, none impressed her like Wiley Faulkner of the Seventh Michigan. Shot through the lungs in the boat crossing and apparently dying, he sat in a corner, propped up against the wall; it hurt him too much to lie down. He told her his name and residence with great difficulty, and she stopped now and then to see how he was. He couldn't swallow anything and breathed so painfully that she feared he would die at any moment. When the stretcher-bearers tried to remove him so as to make room for more wounded from the town, he refused to budge and clung to his pitiful spot in the corner.

In her "campaign diary," Clara carefully noted to which hospitals the "men of Lacy House" had been taken. Many of them were at Lincoln Hospital, one of the modern pavilion designs that had largely replaced the dilapidated, improvised hospitals of 1861.

One day a message came to her from Lincoln Hospital, saying that the men of Ward 17 wanted to see her. When she arrived there, seventy wounded soldiers saluted her, some standing, others rising feebly from their beds, and gave her three rousing cheers. All of them had left their blood at Fredericksburg, all had been at the Lacy House, all had been bandaged and fed by Clara's hand, and all loved her. To them "Miss Barton" was the outstanding nurse of the war, and their hurrahs moved her to her depths. Then a young man with a bright complexion came forward. "I am Wiley Faulkner of the 7th Michigan," he said. "I didn't die and the milk punch lasted all the way to Washington."

Not long after that, as she sat in her room contending with a mass of accumulated correspondence, Clara heard a limping footstep in the hallway and then a rap at her door. When she opened it, she was surprised to see a young man leaning on his crutch. It was her "hero of the four words," who said again, "You saved my life."

Andersonville and Belle Isle - Camp Parole

“The prospects of a speedy peace either in the conquest or the submission of the South has never been so cheering,” the *New York Herald* triumphantly declared on January 1, 1865. To delay its imminent defeat, the Confederacy reestablished the practice of prisoner exchange in early 1865. A result of the resumed exchanges was thousands of emaciated and desperately ill former Union prisoners from infamous camps like Andersonville and Belle Isle began arriving at a designated drop-off point known as Camp Parole, near Annapolis, Maryland.

At the beginning of 1865, Clara Barton had returned to Washington to nurse her brother Stephen and nephew Irving Vassall who had both fallen ill. While Barton was in Washington, Vassall, a government employee, had heard news that exchanged Union prisoners were returning in poor condition and that the government needed help notifying the relatives of those who were missing or had died in captivity. Vassall relayed the information to Barton in the hope that she might be able to offer assistance. Barton empathized deeply with families suffering loss, because she would eventually lose both Stephen and Irving that same spring.

In February 1865, Barton wrote to President Abraham Lincoln in pursuit of permission to become an official government correspondent seeking those who had vanished during the conflict. In an effort to capture the attention of a man besieged by correspondence, she wrote her letter in exceedingly grandiose script:

To his Excellency Abraham Lincoln President of the United States

Sir, I most respectfully solicit your authority and endorsement to allow me to act temporarily as general correspondent at Annapolis Maryland, having in view the reception and answering of letters from the friends of our prisoners now being exchanged.

It will be my object also to obtain and furnish all possible information in regard to those that have died during their confinement.

On March 24, 1865, Barton received the sanction of the president to go to Annapolis in an official capacity. Her job would be to list the names of those who died in captivity and notify their families. Word quickly spread around the nation about Barton's appointment to look for missing soldiers through the newspapers. Even by 1865, Barton had developed a reputation as a friend of the soldier. She often traveled to battlefields to help the sick and wounded, so loved ones occasionally sent her letters inquiring if she had seen their relatives. Barton's official appointment meant she received thousands of letters (sometimes as many as 150 a day) from concerned relatives, primarily women, looking for loved ones. At Annapolis, Barton witnessed chaos as thousands of emaciated former prisoners disembarked from the vessels that carried them to freedom from Confederate prisons. As the weakened men struggled from the ships, Barton noted that inconsistent record-keeping made it almost impossible to know who had been left behind in the graveyards at the prisons. In lieu of official reports, Barton turned to the best source of information she had on-hand: the soldiers themselves. She implored the returning soldiers to tell her about their comrades who did not make the return journey. To meet the astonishing demand of letters, Barton hired a few assistants with her own money, expecting the government would eventually reimburse her. Barton and her small team were able to keep up with the overwhelming rate of incoming inquiries with form letters. A few well-placed blank lines allowed Barton to respond more efficiently to the many concerned writers. "Your communication of _____ is received, and the name of _____ placed upon my lists. It will be my earnest endeavor to bring these lists to the notice of returned soldiers everywhere. Be assured that as soon as any information of interest to you is gained, it will be promptly forwarded."

Barton refused to take money from those desperately searching for lost relatives. She even refused donations as little as one dollar on a matter of principle.

Gradually she compiled a master list of soldiers who had disappeared during the Civil War. In June 1865, she published the first "Roll of Missing Men" which listed 1,533 names. By the conclusion of her work in 1868, five separate rolls were published containing 6,650 names. These lists organized the names by state, and contained instructions for anyone, with knowledge of these men's whereabouts to write to her. President Andrew Johnson allowed Barton to use the larger government printing press to publish the Rolls of Missing Men, a task that would have been prohibitively expensive otherwise.

Barton explained to one concerned writer how she curated the names on her Rolls of Missing Men: "The appearance of a man's name upon my roll is simply evidence that some friend is asking for him...and the non-appearance signifies that he has not been inquired for or there has not been time to get his name upon a roll."

After Camp Parole closed, Barton decided to continue searching for missing soldiers. A meeting with Dorence Atwater in June 1865 propelled her mission to new heights. Atwater kept a hidden and detailed list of those who died at the notorious Andersonville Prison during his time in captivity there. After seeing the first Roll of Missing Men, he decided to contact Barton to offer his help. Atwater's information enabled an expedition, which included Barton, to go to Andersonville, identify the graves of 13,000 missing soldiers and notify the families. The team eventually established a national cemetery at the location of the prison. The whole process lasted through the middle of August.

Clara Barton and Dorance Atwater



As a part of the Andersonville team, Barton played a significant role in bringing closure to thousands of families, but she was unsure how much longer she could continue to search for missing men without extra money as her personal funds were beginning to run dry. It was not until early 1866 with the assistance of her friend Francis Dana Barker Gage that Barton was able to raise money to continue her work. Gage wrote several pleas for Barton in the *New York Independent* soliciting money for her noble cause. Gage also helped Barton draft a petition to send to Congress. After much deliberation, Congress elected to grant her \$15,000 as a reimbursement for her previous efforts and to keep the mission going. With that boost, Barton was able to continue the work of the Missing Soldiers Office through the end of 1868.

In her final report to Congress, Barton presented some amazing numbers. In four years the Missing Soldiers Office “had received 63,182 inquiries, written 41,855 letters, mailed 58,693 printed circulars, distributed 99,057 copies of her printed rolls, and identified 22,000 men.”

As someone who had seen and helped to ease so much physical trauma on Civil War battlefields, Barton recognized how important the work of finding missing men was to soothe the minds of loved ones at home. Barton herself tried to describe the inspiration that kept her moving in spite of challenging circumstances in a letter to a benefactor:

If it has been my privilege to lighten never so little the heavy burden of grief which has been laid upon the hearts of our suffering people, or throw the feeble weight of my arm on the side of my country in her hour of trial, if I have made one heart stronger, or one war less bitter, I regard it as a blessing forever beyond my power to express. And whatever yet remains to be done, or however weary I may become even in well doing, my soul will always be lifted up, my hands strengthened, my step quickened, and the miles shortened by the reflection that the hearts of good men and women are with me in my work; that I carry their respect and approval, and that their generous consideration is helping me on to its accomplishment. CB



PERSONAL REMEMBRANCES by Gail Brooks

Growing Up in a Small Town

the War Years - 1942 - 1948

Along the Susquehanna River in North Central Pennsylvania is “a beautiful, wild, mountainous country,” dotted by farms and a few small towns settled as early as Revolutionary War days. In Lycoming County, between the Muncy Hills and the White Deer Valley, is the borough of Montgomery, where farmers and enterprising businessmen plied their trades. Quoting from an article written in 1892, “Within their dark and hidden recesses many strange and startling scenes have been enacted. On the west side of the borough line the escarpment of Penny Hill is presented with its craggy face and overhanging cliffs, covered with stunted foliage and ferns in summer time and glittering icicles when the frost king reigns.” I repeat this colorful language because it describes how I remember the area where I spent some of my early years, wandering among the “foliage” and “glittering icicles” with my parents, often alone or with my great dog Squeegie – unheard of for a child in Year 2019!

In the mid-1800s residents set up various mills and factories, too often destroyed by fire. Prosperity came with the railroad, a newspaper, a distillery, and a hotel known as the Montgomery House, from which the borough derived its name. Among the early settlers were families whose names I knew a century later – Bower, Grady, Waltman, Decker, Hartzell, Schollenberger – a mixture primarily of English and German, Presbyterian and Lutheran.

The town, as most of the country, was hit hard by the Great Depression, and most of the factories failed. And then as war clouds were rising in Europe, young men of the area left to join the armed forces and other great changes came to the area. In the 1940 census, the village had a population below 2,000.

The greatest changes came about through the purchase by the Federal Government of 9,000 acres in nearby White Deer Valley, primarily dairy farms and the tiny hamlet of Alvira. There were mixed feelings about taking of the land by eminent domain. The area's economy benefitted from the influx of new money and jobs, but many old-time families were uprooted forever and are resentful even today.

It was at this time, 1942, that my father, a member of the U.S. Corps of Engineers, was transferred to the area to construct the Susquehanna Ordnance Depot. My family lived in Montgomery during my earliest school years. Our first home was with the Henderson family on Hous-(pronounced House)-ton Avenue, unlike our Texas city Houston. Mr. Henderson, a local businessman and community leader, was very much involved with the war effort, organizing drives to collect tin cans and milkweed floss (used to fill military sleeping bags), selling Victory bonds, manning the town lookout post in case German planes flew over.



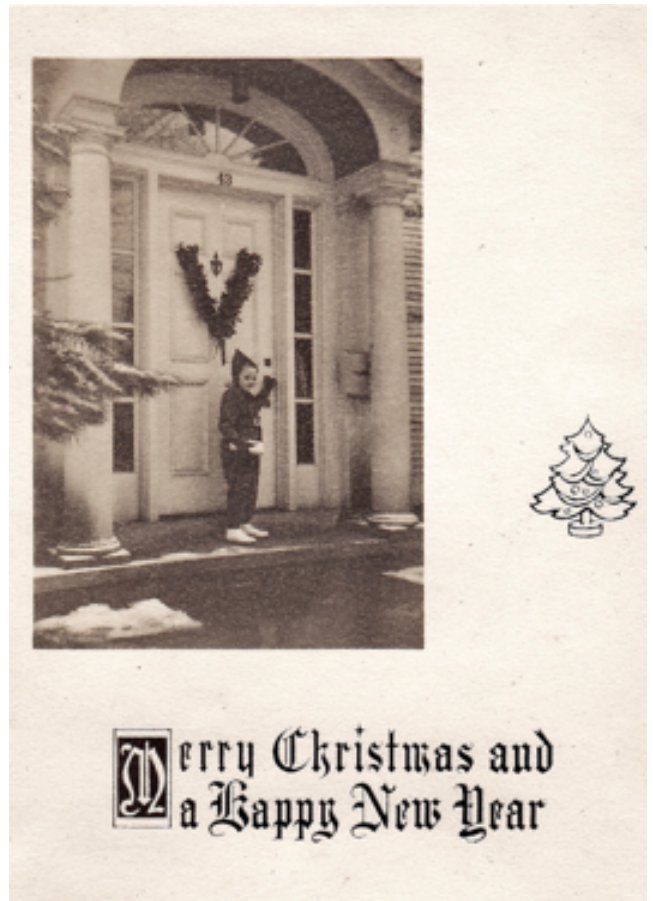
Gail & her father, Norman (Pinky) Woodridge.
With their dog, Squeegee @ 1944

The ordnance depot was intended for storage of explosive material, but before the end of the war the project was abandoned. The once idyllic community I knew suffered after the war since the dairy industry has changed and there is little, if any, manufacturing remaining. The beautiful countryside outside Montgomery now is home to a landfill for Philadelphia. The acreage in the White Deer Valley is the site of Allenwood Federal Penitentiary and public game lands, which may be enjoyed by hunters and hikers exploring old cemeteries or abandoned concrete bunkers.



Gail with her Mother, Katherine.
And Squeegie. @ 1944

Gail Wooldridge Brooks
March 30, 2019



Christmas with Gail at her
front door. @ 1944

Sources:

Alvira - D. B. Artman (1900); Viola Weaver Whipple @ 1920:
The Story of a Little Town, The Birth and Death of Alvira, PA
Atlas Obscura.com, Bunkers of Alvira
History of Lycoming County Pennsylvania,
edited by John F. Meginness; @1892

After the attack on Pearl Harbor in December of 1941, the United States was determined to ramp up production of necessary war materials, at all costs.

To this end, in the spring of 1942 the federal government seized the small village of Alvira, Pennsylvania, and after kicking out the populace, razed almost every building in the village to build the Susquehanna Ordnance Depot. One of the most interesting features of the depot were the 149 concrete, “igloo-style” bunkers used for stable storage of explosive materials. Soon it was realized that the need for TNT had been



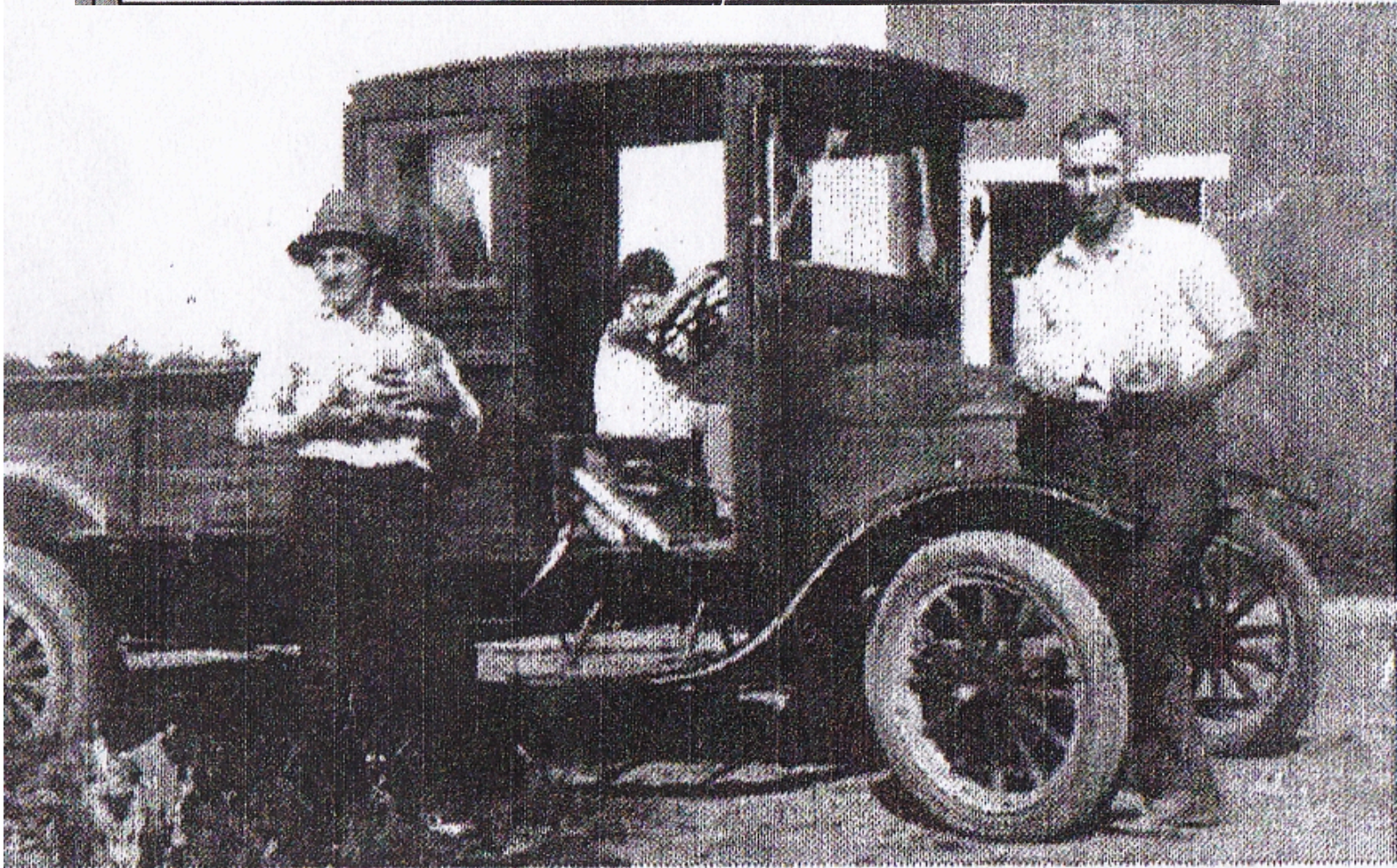
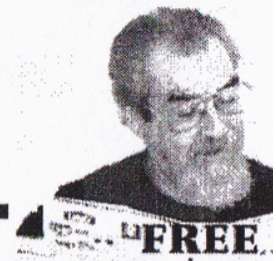
overestimated, and the depot actually sat idle through the last years of World War II. Ownership of the land was broken up over the years with sections given to military testing and correctional facilities, but the land where the concrete bunkers were built was returned to the State of Pennsylvania and designated as game land.



O'Hearn's Histories

Vol. 10 Number 7 Cayuga County, New York

September 2009



Last month I received the above photo and a letter of some memories of Auburn's past. The little girl at the wheel is Grace Martin, on the left is Jack Harvey and on right is William Whitehead. It was taken at a truck farm on Beech Tree Road, in the 1930s.

Like so many of the people I have become acquainted with since I started publishing O'Hearn's Histories, I have never met Grace Martin. I know her through emails and letters she has written to me over the past ten years. She lives in Arizona. I decided to call Grace on the phone. After several attempts I finally got in touch with her. We talked for over an hour. It was a pleasant experience.

I asked Grace if I could publish the memories she shared with me. She said I could. You will find her memories of Auburn on page 4 of this issue.

Grace Martin's Memories

Every month, O'Hearn's Histories bring back memories of Auburn. Companies that built plants along the Owasco Outlet. Wadsworth, where my Uncle Jack Harvey was the night watchmen. The Hackney Boys spent many evenings with him - Emmi's come to mind. -How he would signal to his wife Mabel (8 Wheeler St.) across the outlet at a certain time every night. Mary Ann Wadsworth had a Red Chrysler Highlander Convertible with plaid upholstery, that I swore I was going to have one like it someday - I'm 86 now, and NOT YET!

The Owasco outlet ran behind the farm where I grew up on the Whitehead Truck Garden Farm. Then the recipe for Switchel in one month of 'Histories' - we sure drank a lot of that during the 'haying' season.

Born on 8/14/23, when my Mother; Catherine (Harvey) & my Father, George Marz lived in the Bryants House at 174 ½ Van Anden St. My Mother worked at Fuller's store on Wall St.-and known in the Auburn area as an accomplished pianist & Organist at Wall Street Church. My Father worked at Seymour Library and at the L.V. Round House. (later years, he drove City Bus in Auburn)

My Mother had TB when I was 4 yrs old. & asked her sister, Mary Grace (Harvey) Whitehead to take care of me. I went to live with 'Grace and Will' Whitehead on Beech Tree Road on the Whitehead Truck Garden Farm. Mother died when I was 5.

I loved it there. My Uncles parents that lived in the BIG house, & were like Grandparents. There was a greenhouse, chickens, barn, horses, a cow and (usually a calf)...and my dog, Laddie, given to me by the Gillette's that ran a butcher shop on Wall St.

In the green house we raised bedding plants. As I would sit between my Uncle & his father, I would pick up the plants that they would be throwing away...and plant my own boxes of 12 plants. They gave me my own little spot in the greenhouse.

The wooden boxes that were used for the bedding plants, were made from the orange crates, that we will gather, when we delivered to the stores. They had to be knocked apart, resawed, and made into smaller boxes. That was the winters job.



Even at an early age, when I would need to sit on the edge of the seat to reach the pedals, I was allowed to drive the truck in the fields to pick up the bushels of produce left at the end of each row.

The area around Beech Tree Road and Canoga Road, had many Truck Garden Farms at that time. Ridley's was on the corner, (Beech Tree Rd. & Canoga Rd.) then going towards the Button Works, was Millers, Embodys, and Juli's. All had greenhouses. Clayton Marshall started one, but never finished it.

Kids from the Hackney neighborhood used to come to help with the berry picking. etc. Which brings me to the neighborhood grocery stores.

As I got older, I was able to go 'to market' with my Uncle. There were the 2 stores in Hackney, one run by Lena...don't remember the other corner store. They never bought much from us.

Up on North Street, was 2 stores, one run by another Lena, and Sperduti's. (you ran a story about them one month) We used to furnish Bishop's restaurant with 'Veggies too...also Nick Drossos at Close & Brady's, Louie at the Mohican Store, and Cimpi's. (where I saw my first tarantula spider)

Then there was a place on North St. down in back of a house, where we used to leave produce. Seems as if it belonged to Cimpi's (these spellings may NOT be correct.)

Just off Columbus St.- street that went between Alco 's bldgs. (Jefferson St.?) there were 2 more stores... and there a small store in a house, run by Mowbray's but haven't any idea what street it was on, but seems so it went over to W. Genesee St. There were a couple of stores on W. Genesee St. too!

I can see them all in my mind, but names -some 75 years later, just won't come.

It's FUN to think about these things of the past...and share memories with friends. This is probably more than you ever wanted to know :-). Keep those 'Histories coming' - I'm enjoying them, and so is my daughter, in Canada who also has a subscription .

Footnote from Auburn Citizen by Connie Reilley, Dec 25, 2014:
Joe O'Hearn has been publishing O'Hearn's Histories for 15 years and has decided to make more time to spend with Evelyn, his wife, who has helped him so much with this project. And remembering their beloved daughter, Katie, who helped with deliveries and anything else that she could do, Joe is probably realizing just how precious time really is. How do we thank a man who has preserved so much history and made it so easy for all of us to access?

At Grace Martin's home in Green Valley, Az



Every once in a while, we are suddenly aware of being in the presence of someone who has had experiences that stops you cold. Had an occasion to visit with Grace Martin, who is sitting next to Christine in this photo, with Lyn and Carol as bookends! As Grace was showing us her gorgeous home and amazing photographs, she casually remarked that one picture was taken with Ansel Adams who was standing right next to her and he took the same picture! Glup, she went on to tell me about all the times she was with Ray Manley on many photo adventures. Thanks, Grace for sharing, it was so Cool! JAH

FRESH FLOWERS



"Travel changes you. As you move through this life and this world, you change things slightly, you leave marks behind, however small. And in return, life--and travel--leaves marks on you."

Anthony Bourdain